

Idaho Trade Token Newsletter

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News

The August issue of NATCA's **Talkin' Tokens** reports that Hal Dunn is recovering from gall bladder surgery in July. Get well quickly, Hal!

Mike Fritz e-mailed me that he had just heard that Don MacBride had passed away on July 15, 1998. Don had a family summer place on Spirit Lake, near Mike's In-Laws. Don had not been in good health for several years, and indicated to me last year that he was pretty much bound by the kidney dialysis machine. From the Nampa Idaho Press-Tribune of July 16:

Don MacBride, 76, of Nampa, died Wednesday, July 15, 1998, at a Boise hospital. Don was born February 7, 1922, at Washington, D. C., a son of Clarence S. and Marian Frey MacBride. He moved with his family to St. Johns, Mich., where he completed his education before entering Michigan State University. His college education was interrupted by World War II. After being discharged from the Army Air Corps in 1946, he returned to Michigan State, graduating in 1948. Don was recruited by Kraft Foods and moved to Pocatello.

He married Ethelyn Morgan and her four children May 20, 1954 at Ely, Nevada. They moved to Nampa in 1961, and started the Lustra Corporation. After retirement he became an antique dealer full time and had Mac's Antiques.



Survivors include his wife, a daughter and three sons and their spouses, 21 grandchildren, and two brothers.

Darrel Pierce of Prairie City, OR acquainted me with Don, who had picked up tokens while traveling through eastern Oregon selling lighting with his Lustra Corporation. Don and Ethelyn often set up at flea markets in the Boise area. I am sure that all the Idaho collectors who had the chance to know Don will join me in offering condolences to his family. As Mike says, "it is a shock for another Idaho collector to be gone".

Second Annual Gathering in Salmon

Just as predicted: our gathering at Salmon over the 18th of July was great fun! Here's my version of what we did. I got to Salmon a day early after taking several days to get there. Along the way I stopped at courthouses to do some token research. At Fairfield, the records were pretty minimal as Camas County is one of the youngest of Idaho's counties and the population has always been small. In Hailey, I spent quite a bit of time looking through the

Blaine County records, but could not find many of the older records I wanted. The Custer County courthouse in Challis had the best records I saw on this trip. I found a book listing the liquor license bonds issued in the county. The law required two persons to post a \$500 bond for a saloon. It was interesting to note how competing saloon keepers would post bonds for each other, rather than going to others in the community. There seemed to be about a dozen in Bayhorse alone who followed this practice of "scratching each other's back".

The last courthouse I visited was Lemhi County's in Salmon. Their vault was tiny, and I could not find any more than the index to business names. The clerk there was very helpful, and she found the key to the attic storage room and let me look through stuff there. There was lots of interesting material, but we could not find anything pertinent to tokens. She promised to keep looking and took my name and number in case she found the information I was after. I got a call from her the next week. She had found it and read it to me over the telephone!

Robert Higdem was in Salmon on business and could not be with the rest of us for the gathering, but I went to dinner with him Thursday evening so we could talk tokens. I spent Friday looking at area points of interest, including the Salmon Hot Springs Resort that has long intrigued me. It was operated at one time by Fred Brough, Salmon saloon-keeper and token-issuer, but had fallen into a sad state of decay. The current owners are trying to restore some of its former glory, but they have a long road ahead of them.

When I got back to the Stagecoach Inn Friday afternoon, Dean Rasmussen and Dan Lute were talking tokens in Dan's room, so I joined in. We broke off in time to get ready for the dinner meeting. By that time Bob Berg and his wife arrived from Pullman, so we walked the few blocks north to the Shady Nook Steak House. Waiting there was Ron Haberman, so in we went. Soon we were joined by Mike Fritz and Elby Thompson, Myron Curtis and his wife, Greg Manos, and Dick Magnuson. With Dean's sons Joe and Jake, that brought the total to 14! After a nice dinner, we went back to the Stagecoach and found that we could meet in a lobby area upstairs, so we got some serious trading, showing, and telling done before midnight.

Saturday morning we went to the Salmon River Coffee Shop for breakfast, where we had fun spending our Sticker Dollars. I had 500 stickers printed up and we put them on Susan B. Anthony dollar coins. I heard reactions ranging from "Is this legal?" to "Wow! The girls are going to fight over these!" We also had 2-inch yellow pinback buttons to wear. A "press release" printed in the Recorder-Herald on July 16 warned the townsfolk that we were coming.



We then met at the Lemhi County Museum where Rose Corum took us on a walking tour of Salmon's Main Street. She had grown up in Salmon and knew much about the early business buildings. The only problem was that Main Street traffic was louder than she was. Next we had a chance to see all the pictures and artifacts in the museum.

After getting sandwiches to take for lunch, 10 of us left in three vehicles for the road tour. We went south of Salmon several miles, turned west up Williams Creek and headed over the mountain. We rounded a bend in the road and were treated to seeing a herd of elk in a meadow. We stopped to take pictures and the elk kept coming out of the trees - probably 75

in all. We continued on to Leesburg where we stopped to wander up and down the main street and have our lunch. There is large scale mining activity going on real close to the Leesburg site but there has been some recent stabilization work done on the old buildings; hopefully the townsite will be preserved.

At the right is a nice photo by LaVon Berg of Bob, Ron, Greg, John, Joe, Jake, Mike, Dan, and Dean lunching in front of a Leesburg building.



Leaving this ghost town, we headed back down Napias Creek to Panther Creek with a quick look at the Cobalt mining area. We proceeded on down Panther Creek to the Salmon River where we took a pop stop. Near Shoup we saw a dozen or so bighorn sheep along the road. With time running out, we motored on through North Fork and up to Gibbonsville where Dean had arranged for George Jemmett to open the museum for us. There are three Gibbonsville tokens on display there along with a number of other interesting artifacts. Then, at the home of Wayne and Julia Randolph, where once stood the Bennett Saloon, we were shown some advertising mirrors from the A. D. & M. mine store before Julia Randolph invited us in to see a slide show she had prepared on Gibbonsville's history. Julia is the author of the Gibbonsville history books and one on the cemeteries of Lemhi County. She's a very talented and knowledgeable lady.

We then headed back to Salmon and the "official meeting" in the Lemhi Room at the Stagecoach. A couple of pizzas were quickly devoured while all sorts of trades were made around the table. Before adjourning at about 10:30, we decided that we would convene at Wallace, Idaho next year, tentatively on the 24th of July. Mike Fritz will coordinate the efforts with Dick Magnuson assisting. Don't miss it as these gatherings are getting better every year. A big thanks to Dean Rasmussen for putting this one together - great job, Dean!

Whetstone List

A real treat at Salmon was obtaining "hot off the press" copies of Dean Rasmussen's **Idaho Whetstones**. In this first-of-a-kind work, Dean describes the 172 Idaho advertising whetstones that have been reported to him, and provides some very interesting statistical and background information on them. Please help Dean with this ongoing effort by reporting all the stones you know of to him and keeping him appraised of changes in ownership. For those who didn't get a copy of **Idaho Whetstones**, send \$10 to Dean at 427 Terra Vista St., Rexburg, ID 83440-2534.



Quick Tag Maverick

At the local pet supermarket, I noticed a kiosk with what appeared to be a video machine. It was a token-operated pet tag making machine. Purchase two \$2.50 tokens at the cashier, drop them in the slot, and then choose a tag style with the touch screen. Then using a touch

screen keyboard, write out Fido's name and phone number and out comes the engraved tag. The tokens themselves are the brass large style "No Cash Value" as in the Riggins SCAT token. The obverse only says QUICK TAG. If anyone has a burning desire to add one to their collection, let me know and I'll get you one. The intent is for the token to stay in the store.

215 North 8th Street, Boise

Dan Lute recently asked me about a 31mm brass 25¢ Curtis Cigar Store maverick that had been dug in Boise. I quickly went through my maverick book and found an identical piece that had also been dug in the area. Unfortunately, both pieces are extremely dark from their time in the ground. Then Dan went to work and found that William D. Curtis had a cigar store at the above address in 1911. That would be a good attribution if the Curtis name were less common, and we knew for sure the name of his business. I found that Curtis died in 1959 and dug out his obituary which stated that he had owned the Curtis Cigar Store. So now we have a pretty certain home for these tokens, and further information shows more facts. There are probably going to be other denominations of the Curtis token found - a 5¢ one is very likely.



The 1904 Boise Polk's City Directory shows nothing at the 215 North 8th address, but in 1905 E. Francis Gary is listed as having a cigar store there. He was shown residing there as well, a not-uncommon practice. In the 1906-07 Directory, he is listed as "Cigars, Tobacco, Confectionery, School and Office Supplies, Fruits, and General News", again residing there. Now for the exciting part: that name sounded vaguely familiar, and I finally recalled where I had seen it. It is on the cover of Schell's first edition of Idaho Merchants'



Tokens, where a page from the 1908 Salt Lake Stamp Company catalog illustrates a type of "Pool Check" they can produce. The triangular maverick E. FRANCIS GARY, / 10 / CENTS is shown as type No. 1672, so we can presume that the piece was actually made - now somebody please find one!

Also in the 1906-07 Directory, George G. Gibson is listed as a driver for Koll Bros. stables and James W. Gibson is shown as a miner. The 1908 Directory no longer lists Gary, but it shows the Gibson Brothers [George G. and James W.] as having the cigar store at 215 North 8th. The 24mm aluminum 5¢ token from this operation is known in only two examples, both in rather beat-up condition.



The 1908 Directory shows a John Hagler as conductor for the Boise Valley Railway Co. In 1909-10, Hiram K. Boone and John Hagler are shown under the name of Boone & Hagler Cigars at 215 North 8th. The Gibson Brothers are no longer listed, but William D. Curtis

makes his first Boise directory appearance as compositor for the Statesman, residing at 412 N. 2nd.

The 1911 Directory shows Hyrum Boone as a driver for Graves Transfer Co., John Hagler as a clerk at Plowhead's Market Grocery, and William D. Curtis as a printer at the Statesman plus cigars at 215 North 8th while residing at 1605 North 10th.. Additionally a Theodore D. Curtis is shown at the same residence and working as a manager for W. D. Curtis. No other traces of Theodore have been found; presumably he was a brother of William.

The 1912-13 Directory shows William D. Curtis as cigars, 215 North 8th, residing at 1719 North 9th. In 1914 he appears as a printer for the Statesman in addition to his cigar store. In 1915 he is shown as a printer for the Statesman only and no one is shown as having a store at 215 North 8th in that year or for several years thereafter.

Cemetery records yield death dates which are pointers to newspaper obituaries. The Statesman of October 19, 1946 contained an obituary for one of the Gibson Brothers:

George Gates Gibson, 77, a resident of Idaho since 1890 and formerly in the hack and livery business in Boise, died at a local hospital Friday [October 18] night following a long illness.

Mr. Gibson was born at St. Joseph, Mo., Aug. 13, 1869, and moved to Colorado with his family when three., later coming to Idaho in a covered wagon. He was a member of the Methodist church in Boise and the Sons and Daughters of Idaho.

He is survived by two brothers, J. W. Gibson and C. F. Gibson, both of Boise.

The Statesman for August 2, 1948 reported on the second Gibson brother:

James Weller Gibson, 81, died Sunday [August 1 - interestingly, exactly 50 years ago as I write this] at his home, 1808 North Nineteenth street. He had lived in Boise 48 years.

A retired farmer, Mr. Gibson was a onetime employee of the statehouse and an ex-Boise city policemen. He belonged to the First Christian church, Sons and Daughters of Idaho, and Ada lodge No. 3, IOOF. He was born Oct. 12, 1866 at Helena, Montana.

Surviving are his wife, Eva E. Gibson, and a brother, C. F. Gibson of Boise.

The Gibson Brothers' short foray into the cigar store business was just a minor part of their careers, so it did not appear in their obituaries. I have found nothing on C. F. Gibson, but it would be interesting to see where he fit into the family which evidently was in Montana in 1866, back to Missouri in 1869, in Colorado in 1872, and finally to Idaho in 1900.

From the Statesman of August 17, 1959:

William (Bill) Dean Curtis, 77, a well-known Boise printer who retired from the Statesman in 1949 after 39 years of service, died Sunday [August 16] morning at

a Colorado Springs, Colo. Hospital. He and his wife Edna [actually Achsa Anna] had been living at the International Typographical home at Colorado Springs.

Mr. Curtis was born at Dakota City, Neb., June 6, 1882 and married Achsa Sleade at Pueblo, Colo., July 4, 1903. The couple moved to Boise in 1909 and for a short time in 1910 he owned and operated the Curtis Cigar store on North Eighth street. Mr. Curtis worked for the Boise Capital News for a short time prior to his tenure with The Statesman, where he was composing room foreman at the time of his retirement. He had been in ill health since his retirement.

Mr. Curtis was a member of the Moose lodge of Boise and the IOOF lodge at Pueblo. He was a member of the 25-year club of the Typographical union at Boise.

Mrs. Achsa Anna [Sleade] Curtis, 77, died June 14, 1960 in Boise. Her obituary confirmed that the couple had moved to Boise in 1909. She evidently returned to Boise from Colorado Springs after the death of her husband.

The cigar business in Boise was crowded with competition, many individuals and partnerships tried their hand at the line of work. Even though the majority of men smoked, cigar stores had to supplement their income with selling candy, fruit, newspapers, pool games and the like. It was still a tough business, and the parade of proprietors through 215 North 8th seldom lasted longer than a year in the decade between 1905 and 1915.

Off to Portland

I'm off to the Convention of the American Numismatic Association and the annual meeting of the Token and Medal Society in Portland, Oregon. I hope to see some of you there!

Best regards,

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